

Introduction: Parking and Parking Charges

The Commute Trip Reduction Law of 1991 was designed to improve Washington's quality of life through the reduction of single-occupant vehicle (SOV) commuting. Reducing the number of SOVs will reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and decrease dependency on petroleum products. In 1995, the Washington State Legislature passed the State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Law, SSB 5084, giving state agencies the flexibility to use internal funds to support their commute trip reduction (CTR) programs, the authority to implement parking fees at worksites as an element of their commute trip reduction programs, and direction on how the state will reduce its subsidization of employee parking and allocation of employee parking. The RCWs affected by SSB 5084 are RCW 43.01.225, 230, 236, and 240 and RCW 46.08.172.

SSB 5084, the 1995 State Agency Commute Trip Reduction Program Law, had an effective date of July 23, 1995. There are sections of the 1995 law that apply to all state agencies, not just those affected by the 1991 Commute Trip Reduction Law. **All** state agencies must review the parking situation at each of its worksites and, where needed, develop parking programs to meet the intent of the 1995 law.

The Parking Program Guidelines for State Agencies, adopted by the Interagency Task Force for Commute Trip Reduction, are designed to assist state agencies to implement the parking elements of RCW 43.01.240 and RCW 43.01.225.

SSB 5084's directives include: (*Note: The language below is from the law.*)

Agencies' responsibilities:

- ♦ GA shall continue to establish and collect parking fees on the Capitol Campus. (RCW 46.08.172)
- ♦ To reduce the state's subsidization of employee parking, after July 1997 agencies shall not enter into leases for employee parking in excess of building code requirements, unless authorized by the director of the Department of General Administration. (RCW 43.01.240)
(*Note: State Agency Employee Parking Exemption Guidelines were adopted by the Interagency Task Force in January 1997.*)
- ♦ In situations where there are fewer parking spaces than employees at a worksite, parking shall be equitably allocated, with no special preference given to managers. (RCW 43.01.240)
- ♦ Agencies must establish a committee to advise the agency heads on the parking fee. The committee must, at a minimum, include representation from management, administrative staff, production workers, and state employee bargaining units. (RCW 43.01.240)
(*Note: Information and recommendations on committee formation and the allocation of parking is provided in this document.*)

Agencies' rights:

- ♦ CTR funds for state agencies no longer have to be appropriated by the Legislature. Agencies may use internal funds and/or parking fee revenues to support their CTR programs. (RCW 43.01.230)

- ◆ Agencies off the Capitol Campus may, as an element of their CTR programs, impose parking fees. The fees may be used to support the agency's: a) CTR program; b) parking program; and/or c) lease or ownership costs for parking. (RCW 43.01.240)
- ◆ Agencies located on the Capitol Campus may impose a surcharge on the parking fees established by GA and may use those fees as described for agencies off the campus. (RCW 43.01.240)

Recommended Parking Program Policies

The following could have policy implications and should be considered as part of your agency's CTR and/or parking programs.

1. ***Definition of carpool:*** A motor vehicle occupied by two (2) to six (6) people traveling together for their commute trip that results in the reduction of a minimum of one motor vehicle trip. (Definition from *Commute Trip Reduction Task Force Guidelines*, Chapter 1, Section 4, July 1992.) *Persons under 16 years of age commuting in a carpool do not count as carpool members because they do not eliminate a vehicle trip.* (Definition added in *State Government CTR Plan*, "Carpooling with Personal Vehicles", Chapter 2, page 5, April 1993.)

The Interagency Task Force (ITF) for Commute Trip Reduction recommends: *Continue to use the carpool definition, and add the following information:*

- ◆ Taking children to and from day care and/or school does not constitute a carpool because no vehicle trip is eliminated.
- ◆ Not all members of the carpool need to be state employees.
- ◆ The driver of the carpool vehicle must be a state employee if the vehicle is to be parked in a state worksite parking lot.
- ◆ Agencies may choose to allow different configurations for carpools. However, to qualify as a carpool on the state CTR survey, more than half the trip has to be made with two (2) or more persons over the age of 16 in the vehicle.

2. ***Agency policies should also define:***

- ◆ Eligible employees. (full-time, part time, project, etc.)
No ITF recommendation.
- ◆ How many times a week an employee must use an alternate commute mode to qualify for either CTR program incentives, such as a bus pass, or parking incentives such as preferential parking.
ITF recommendation: *An employee must use an alternate commute mode a minimum of 60 percent of the time.*

- ♦ How many times an employee who uses an alternate commute mode can park free where there are parking fees, or in the preferred area where there are no parking fees.

ITF recommendation: *Up to four times a month in a set-aside ridesharing area. (To qualify, an employee must use alternate mode 60 percent of the time.)*

Parking Programs

Because parking and commute options are related, agencies should look at the two programs together. While it is possible to have parking without a commute trip reduction program, it may be impossible to have an effective commute trip reduction program without a parking program. When parking is plentiful and free, there are few incentives for employees to use alternate commute modes. When parking is limited or costly, many employees will want assistance on commute options.

RCW 43.01.240 affects agency parking programs as follows:

- ♦ Parking spaces will be allocated with no special preference given to managers;
- ♦ Agencies off the Capitol Campus may impose parking fees as part of their CTR program;
- ♦ Agencies shall have committees to advise directors on parking fees;
- ♦ Agencies shall not enter into leases for employee parking in excess of building code requirements after July 1997.

The following should be considered by agencies **off** the Capitol Campus when developing an agency parking program. The parking program for employees of agencies **on** the Capitol Campus will be addressed through a campus parking committee to be convened by the Department of General Administration.

1. Coordinator

Each agency and/or worksite should appoint a parking program coordinator. Agencies might consider appointing their commute trip reduction coordinator or a worksite employee transportation coordinator as the parking program coordinator(s). If that is not workable, a process should be in place for the two programs to coordinate efforts.

2. Committee

The ITF recommends that each agency and/or worksite establish a committee to develop the agency's parking program, *even if the agency will not be imposing parking fees*. The committee should be directed to develop a parking program that addresses all the directives of SSB 5084 and is compatible with the agency's commute trip reduction program. While each agency must determine the makeup of the committee, the law directs that the membership include *at least*:

- ♦ Management;
- ♦ Administrative staff;
- ♦ Production workers; and
- ♦ State employee bargaining units.

There are several ways the committee could be established:

- ♦ Same committee doing both CTR and parking (*Recommendation of ITF*);
- ♦ “Umbrella” committee with subcommittees in regions and/or worksites (*Recommended for agencies with multiple worksites in one or more counties; see below*);
- ♦ A subcommittee of the agency’s CTR committee;
- ♦ Two separate committees (*Process must be established for the two to coordinate*).

It is important that the role and authority of the committee members be clearly defined by the agency and the committee. It should be understood that the committee could, after careful deliberation, come to a conclusion that differs from the direction given by the director or management team. Since the committee is advisory only, agencies should allow the committee to recommend for consideration goals that might be different from those established by the agency.

The agency or committee should establish ground rules by which it will operate. The ground rules should reflect the policies of the agency and the goals of the committee and indicate how membership on the committee will be filled among employees.

Agencies with multiple worksites (in one or more counties) could set up a system to include a committee responsible for developing the agency’s overall parking policies, plus committees at each worksite or group of worksites (similar to the way agencies with multiple worksites have established overall CTR program policies). Agencies are encouraged to use their CTR committee(s) as their parking committee(s). If using the agency’s existing CTR committee(s), be sure to assess the membership to be sure that all the categories of employees listed in the law are represented.

Agencies should develop an overall parking policy that includes guidelines for all worksites to consider, such as the permissibility to charge for parking, the amount to be charged, the definition of what constitutes a carpool, distribution of parking spaces, “rules” for preferential parking, etc. Once an agency’s overall parking program is developed, each worksite would then have the flexibility to develop individual parking programs within the limitations or conditions of the agency.

3. *Survey existing parking*

While RCW 43.01.240 does not require agencies to survey their parking situations, the ITF recommends that before developing a worksite specific parking program, agencies **off** the Capitol Campus survey each worksite to determine if the worksite has fewer parking spaces than employees. If it is determined that there are fewer parking spaces than employees, a parking program must be developed. The following should be considered:

Employees

- ♦ Total number of employees at the worksite.
- ♦ Number of employees who have job-related requirements for own car and/or parking.

Parking spaces available

- ♦ *Total* number of parking spaces available. (Number of spaces included in the building lease **plus** number of spaces leased in addition to those included with the building).
- ♦ Number of spaces zoned. What is the overbooking policy for zoned parking?
- ♦ If in a co-located worksite, what is the total number of spaces allocated to your agency?

Current parking space allocations

- ♦ Number of ADA spaces allocated for employees and visitors.
- ♦ Number of spaces allocated for agency vehicles.
- ♦ Number of visitor spaces allocated.
- ♦ Number of spaces available for employees.
- ♦ Number of spaces currently allocated to management.
- ♦ Number of spaces for ridesharing (carpools/vanpools, bicyclists, walkers, etc.).
 - ◊ Determined by the number of alternate commute mode users registered in the agency's CTR program, including drop-offs and flextime.
- ♦ Number of bicycle spaces: bike racks (covered, uncovered) and/or bike lockers
- ♦ Number of spaces for other uses.

Existing situation for surrounding parking

- ♦ Is the worksite located in or near a neighborhood? Shopping center? Church? Park and Ride? etc.
- ♦ Are there meters for parking around the worksite?
- ♦ Are there parking restrictions imposed by the local jurisdiction? (example: 1 hr signs)
- ♦ Where would employees park if not in the worksite lot?
- ♦ Other worksite/neighborhood demographics.
- ♦ Are there any existing issues with the surrounding parking?

Parking costs to agency

- ♦ If charging employees for parking: (Note: All funds collected off the Capitol Campus must be deposited into the *State Agency Parking Account*, to be allocated back by OFM.)
 - ◊ What is the cost to employees?
 - ◊ How much is collected monthly? Yearly?
 - ◊ What is the cost to the agency?
 - ◊ How are the funds used?

- ◆ If not charging employees for parking:
 - ◇ Current cost of parking in current building lease (if known).
 - ◇ Current cost to the agency for leasing extra spaces for employees.
 - ◇ Current cost for employee reimbursement for parking.

4. **Parking allocations:**

In situations where there are fewer parking spaces than employees at a worksite, parking must be allocated equitably, with no special preference given to managers. *RCW 43.01.240 (3)*

(Note: Applies to agencies both on and off the Capitol Campus.)

The ITF recommends the following:

- ◆ “Allocated equitably,” means all employees who want parking have equal access to a parking space.
- ◆ To ensure equal access to parking, agencies should consider allocating parking in the following order:
 - A. Visitors. *Note: When calculating, consider the following:*
 - ◇ Special needs of the worksite
 - ◇ Services the worksite provides to the public - customer needs
 - ◇ Are visits usually short or long? (Turnover rate)
 - ◇ Service vehicles, vendors
 - ◇ Training facility?
 - ◇ Other visitor needs
 - B. ADA requirements: number of parking spaces that must be set aside and/or assigned to vehicles with legal disability parking permits.
 - C. Agency vehicles. *Note: Ask the following questions:*
 - ◇ How many vehicles are in the space all day?
 - ◇ Could the space be utilized during the day for other parking uses?
 - D. Registered alternate commute mode users who commute in a non-SOV mode at least 60 percent of the time. *Note: Could be determined through a survey, CTR Track program, or the agency’s CTR program.*
 - E. Employees who have a special need for parking. *Note: To help determine the number, agencies should ask the following:*
 - ◇ Is the employee required to have a personal vehicle for work assignments? If so, what percentage of the time? How many employees?
 - ◇ Is the employee’s job an “in and out” business?
 - ◇ Are there other options available? Service such as Capital Courier? Shuttle? Agency vehicle? Taxi? Teleconferencing? Phone conference? Other?
 - ◇ If there is an agency CTR program, is the employee exempt from being officially affected by the local jurisdiction?
 - ◇ Other circumstances as determined by the agency.

F. All other employees who want parking should have equal access to the remaining parking spaces. To ensure that managers are not given special preference, all names should be selected randomly. The random selection could be accomplished in several ways:

- ◇ Percentages by managers/employees;
 - ◇ Percentages by divisions;
 - ◇ Percentages by beginning start times;
 - ◇ All employees included;
 - ◇ As decided by the agency.
- ◆ A selection cycle should be established:
 - ◇ Not less than quarterly, nor more than yearly;
 - ◇ Categories should be reevaluated;
 - ◇ All employee names in category F would be eligible for each random selection.
 - ◆ Establish waiting list procedures. Select a percentage of extra employee names to make up the waiting list.
 - ◆ Agencies should consider an appeals process for employees.
 - ◆ If parking fees are in place, establish payroll deduction for employee parking. Set up a filing system for employee parking records.

5. *Permitting*

Permitting should be considered:

- a) if parking fees will be imposed;
- b) where there are fewer parking spaces than employees; and/or
- c) if there will be preferential parking for alternate commute modes.

6. *Enforce Parking Rules*

- ◆ Enforcement is important for the success of any parking program. Agencies should determine what kind of an enforcement program can be implemented. Agencies should check first with their Attorney General and second with their landlords before putting any enforcement plans into place, or for issues on compliance, when fines can be collected, or impoundment, etc. *Note: GA will continue to research how private and other public employers are handling the enforcement portion of their parking programs.*
- ◆ The agency should determine if enforcement is required to protect the rights of employees who are registered and/or paying for parking. If waiting lists are used, enforcement probably will be required. If parking will be subject to unauthorized use (in congested areas, when many visitors are expected, etc.) enforcement probably will be a requirement.
- ◆ Where enforcement is necessary, the agency should plan for a credible, visible enforcement program. Permitting and enforcement programs should consider, but are not limited to:

required permits; provisions for suspension and/or revocation of parking privileges; provisions for impoundment of vehicles; and/or noncompliance fees.

- ◆ Provisions for hearing rights by employees related to fees, impoundment, suspension and/or revocation of parking privileges should be provided. Agencies should establish an appeals process at each location to review the circumstances surrounding any citation. Both the parker and the enforcing authority should be given adequate time to comment, in writing, before a final determination is made.

7. **RCW 43.01.240 (4)** requires the Department of General Administration to submit a report to the House and Senate Transportation Committees by December 1, 1997 outlining the savings to the state as a result of the law. The report will include information on agencies parking programs.

Zoned Parking

Zoned parking allows more employees to park in an area because there are always employees who do not come to a worksite for a variety of reasons and will not be parking every day. Rather than an assigned space for each individual, the lot is open to all registered parkers with no assigned spaces. Zoned parking adds up to 25 percent “more” parking, because people are gone every day for one reason or another.

The ITF recommends that agencies consider zoned parking at their worksites. The following could be taken into account:

- ◆ Survey existing parking: count how many empty spaces there are over at least a three-week period. Spaces should be counted several times a week and at least twice each day the survey is taken. Note the total number of spaces routinely empty. Determine what percent that is of the parking area and add that many employees to the parking pool.
- ◆ Collect testimonials from agencies where zoned parking works, such as the Capitol Campus, Department of Health, and DCTED.
- ◆ Can establish more than one zone - preferential, “in and out”, shifts, etc.
- ◆ Consider starting with a zoned parking pilot — three to six months.
- ◆ Start slowly - start with only 5 percent overbooking and work up every quarter.

Shared Parking Programs

At multi-agency worksites it may be in the best interests of employees to “pool” the parking and have one parking program for the entire compound or area.

- ◆ Agencies housed together in a facility are encouraged to work together.
- ◆ Shared, zoned parking means more parking for everyone.
- ◆ If unable to work together, each agency must clearly mark its own space.

Charging for Parking

RCW 43.01.240 (2): An agency may, as an element of the agency's commute trip reduction program . . . impose parking rental fees at state-owned and leased properties. . . . Each agency shall establish a committee to advise the agency director on parking rental fees, *taking into account the market rate of comparable, privately owned rental parking in each region.*

The following are suggestions for agencies to consider in the establishment of parking fees:

- ◆ How do we determine how much to charge?
 - ◇ Budget approach:
 - ↳ Determine annual budget for CTR, parking and/or parking lease costs.
 - ↳ Determine internal funds identified by the agency for CTR program.
 - ↳ Determine if there is a deficit between the budget and available funds.
 - ↳ Determine number of parking spaces available.
 - ↳ Determine number of parkers who will pay fee (could be higher than the actual number of parking spaces if using zoned parking).
 - ↳ Divide the budget amount by the number of parkers by 12 months to determine the approximate monthly parking fee needed for programs.
 - ◇ Charge equal to privately or publicly owned parking lots located nearby.
 - ◇ Other as determined by the agency.
- ◆ Agency direction given to the committee established by the director and/or management team. Long-term goals (for CTR and parking) should be defined.
- ◆ Management support is essential and needs to be demonstrated.
- ◆ The agency's CTR and Parking programs need to complement each other.
- ◆ When considering parking rates:
 - ◇ What are the market rates within walking distance? Within a zone? Within a certain mileage? Private and public? Leased lots?
 - ◇ What are the agency's long-term goals:
 - ↳ target certain worksites?
 - ↳ meet SOV goals at CTR affected worksites?
 - ↳ raise money for incentives?
 - ↳ reduce parking supply or demand?
 - ↳ other?
 - ◇ What is the demand for parking at the worksite?
 - ◇ What other parking is available?
 - ◇ Are there safety concerns around the worksite?
 - ◇ Are there shift workers?
 - ◇ Will fees be charged to all employees?

- ◇ Will there be exemptions? If yes, what criteria will be considered?
- ◇ Will the fee be cost-effective for the agency/worksites?
- ◇ How will the fees be used?
- ◆ If offering reduced or free parking for alternate commute mode, agencies should:
 - ◇ Establish eligibility criteria (definitions, number of times used, etc.) for all modes (carpool, vanpool, walkers, bicycling, compressed workweek, telecommuting, and public transit).
 - ◇ Establish a registration system.
 - ◇ Establish a parking pass program and define how many times a month an alternate commute mode user may park for free in the preferential parking area.
- ◆ If it is decided that parking fees will be imposed, a communication plan should be developed to inform employees of the charges and how they will be used. Remember:
 - ◇ Keep employees informed as to why fees are being imposed.
 - ◇ Let employees know what will be offered with the fees that are collected, including any incentives. Incentives could include bus and/or vanpool subsidies, preferential parking, reduced or free parking up to 4 times a month, incentives for non-motorized commuters, or any other action that might encourage alternate mode use.
 - ◇ Point out the positives - environmental and social benefits.
 - ◇ Provide a process to address employee concerns.
 - ◇ Inform employees of the agency's parking enforcement plan.

Note: For more detailed information, refer to the “*Carpooling with Personal Vehicles*” and “*Vanpooling*” sections in the ***State Government Commute Trip Reduction Plan: Guidelines for Worksite Programs, Chapter 2***. For information on the above or incentive programs, contact the State Agency CTR Program staff at (360) 902-7318.